UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.96/945
2 July 2001

Original: ENGLISH

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Fifty-second session

REPORT OF THE TWENTIETH MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE (12 - 14 March 2001)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The meeting was opened by the Chairman of the Executive Committee, His Excellency, Ambassador Ali Khorram (Islamic Republic of Iran), who recalled that requests to participate as observers in meetings of the Standing Committee in 2001 had been received from the governments of Central African Republic, Croatia, Cyprus, Guinea, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, Slovenia, Swaziland, Zambia, and from the Organization of American States. At the proposal of the Chairman, these requests had already been conveyed to members of the Executive Committee, in line with the Committee's decision on observer participation taken in 1999 (A/AC.96/928). The Chairman welcomed observer delegations and non-governmental organization (NGO) delegations attending the Standing Committee as observers, notably those from Africa, CASWANAME and Asia and the Pacific regions.

2. The chairing of agenda item 4 on Protection/Programme policy was shared with His Excellency, Ambassador Johan Molander (Sweden), Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA OF THE NINETEENTH MEETING AND WORK PROGRAMME OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE IN 2001

3. The agenda for the meeting (EC/51/SC/CRP.1) was adopted. The Standing Committee's work programme, as discussed at the Planning Meeting held on 13 December 2000, was also adopted without revision (EC/51/SC/CRP.2).

III. DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER'S STATEMENT

4. In a brief opening statement, the Deputy High Commissioner referred to the three-pronged internal review launched by the new High Commissioner, relating respectively to UNHCR's mandated activities, its operations and

GE.*200100913*

ENG

funding issues. He then shared his reflections on the basic principles that needed to be observed in order to help UNHCR to be a defining leader for refugees.

IV. PROGRAMME AND FUNDING

A. Overall programme and funding in 2000 and projections for 2001

5. The Director of the Division of Communication and Information presented the overall programme and funding review for 2000 and projections for 2001, as contained in conference room paper EC/51/SC/CRP.9. He observed that 2000 had been the first year of application of the unified budget. On the positive side, the change had allowed UNHCR to resource field operations more equitably and earlier than in the past, providing a better view of the whole of country operations than was possible with General and Special Programmes. Another encouraging observation pertained to earmarking: under the new budget structure the portion of unearmarked or broadly earmarked funds had been well over 50%. On the negative side, however, serious difficulties had been encountered due to the uncertainty of funding from one quarter to the next. This had undermined efforts at overall strategic planning, marginalized some key operational activities and had been detrimental to UNHCR's credibility with its operational partners. It had called for a firmer approach to defining operational priorities, an area in which the organization had been found wanting.

6. Concerning the outlook for 2001, the Director recalled that requirements now reached $954.7. Even taking account of generous contributions announced at pledging events late in 2000, the Office was likely to face a shortfall of similar proportions to that experienced last year. This was a serious situation. In this context, he referred to the work initiated by the High Commissioner under Action 3, designed to rethink UNHCR's basic funding mechanism and to reassess management approaches in order to avoid what was fast becoming a chronic shortfall of funding.

7. Delegations taking the floor under this agenda item unanimously welcomed the initiative currently being taken by the High Commissioner to review the activities, structure and funding mechanisms of the Office, as described in his letter of 4 April 2001 to the Chairman. They also looked forward to being informed of the outcome of this important review process and providing their support. Several delegations drew attention to the need for creative ways of addressing the funding challenge, including pursuing efforts to broaden the donor base. They observed that funding the budget, once approved, was a responsibility shared by all Executive Committee members. It was also important, in this context, to recognize the important contribution of host countries. One delegation also suggested that the value-added of working with the unified budget should be assessed as part of the examination of the results of the review under way.

8. Several delegations expressed their concern over the budget cuts that had been announced and cautioned against linear cuts. They recommended that adjustments of activities to address budget shortfalls should be based on priorities set across regions and sectors with a focus on core needs. One delegation drew attention to the priority that must be given to security needs.

9. One observer delegation emphasized the importance of partnership between international agencies, welcoming the priority being given to developing a strategic dialogue which would favour greater predictability of funding and help ensure a common vision and effective distribution of labour among key players.

10. Several delegations commended UNHCR for having organized strategic planning meetings on a pilot basis in Thailand and Zambia. They recommended that such initiatives should be renewed and should involve NGOs as well as refugees in planning for UNHCR's operations.

11. Responding to these observations, the Director of Communication and Information thanked delegations for their support and for the announcements of contributions that had been made. He confirmed that arrangements would be made to brief the Committee on the outcome of the reviews underway, including the various specific issues that had been raised by delegations.

12. Concluding this item, the Chairman took note of the proposed amendments to the draft decision appended to the conference room paper. The revised decision (Annex I A.) was approved.

B. Africa

13. The Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa based his opening statement on the summary made available to delegations. He briefly described both positive and negative trends at regional level, as well as future directions. He drew attention to the effects of funding shortages and stressed the difficulties encountered when cuts had to be made mid-way through the programme cycle. Major problems included an inability to maintain longer-term commitments, decreased levels of care and maintenance services, hampering quick response mechanisms, and resulting in loss of credibility with implementing partners.

14. The many delegations who spoke included a large number from Africa, describing situations facing their countries as hosts to large numbers of refugees and/or returnees. Several delegations expressed appreciation for the High Commissioner's recent visit to West Africa which had served to focus world attention on the situation there. UNHCR's emergency response was also commended. Several delegations expressed their support for the safe corridors inside Guinea, but voiced concern with regard to the passage through rebel-held areas into Sierra Leone. Concern was also expressed as to who would assure the safety of the corridors as well as the extent of Sierra Leone's absorption capacity for returnees.

15. Several delegations expressed hope for prospects of peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), but noted the complexity of humanitarian activities in the region. One delegation recommended the appointment of a high-level humanitarian coordinator to deal with the complexities of Central Africa. An increase in assistance for returnees from Rwanda to the DRC was also called for. Another delegation supported the phasing out of reintegration activities in Rwanda. Two other delegations drew attention to the situation in and around Burundi, where acute security risks persisted.

16. Several delegations acknowledged the importance of responsibility-sharing, noting that the burden of refugees was increasing as the level of UNHCR's assistance decreased. On this subject, several delegations were of the opinion that no further cuts should be made to programmes in Africa. A call was also made for increased efforts for refugee women and children. One delegation made a particular plea for increased protection staff in Africa. Two delegations asked for an update on the implementation of the Conakry Comprehensive Implementation Plan, drawn up jointly by UNHCR and OAU.

17. Other recurrent themes included the devastation caused by HIV/AIDS. Over two-thirds of those affected world-wide were in Africa. There was an urgent need for an interagency, holistic approach to the pandemic. Many delegations expressed solidarity for UNHCR and other humanitarian staff facing security risks in the field, and agreed that staff security was a pre-requisite for any form of humanitarian assistance. One delegation requested an evaluation of the camp security model applied in the United Republic of Tanzania since there were requests for it to be duplicated elsewhere. On the subject of food aid, there was also a plea for improved funding of WFP programmes as the food basket for refugees did not always reach minimum standards.

18. Responding, the Director of the Bureau for Africa expressed appreciation for the support expressed, notably with respect to UNHCR's recent emergency response in various parts of West Africa. The issue of assessing the impact of the decentralized management structure would be discussed at a subsequent meeting. On the subject of interagency cooperation, the Regional Director for West Africa informed the Committee of the forthcoming signature of a Memorandum of Understanding with ECOWAS, which was a welcome development. On the other hand, attempts to involve other agencies such as UNDP, the World Bank and IGAD in reintegration activities design to anchor the returnees in their new communities, were not always successful, but efforts would continue. The Regional Director for Southern Africa also drew attention to the importance of education as a key factor in preparing children and adolescents to become useful members of their future society. Budget restrictions were particularly damaging when they detracted from achieving this goal.

C. CASWANAME

19. The Director of the Regional Bureau for Central Asia, South-West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East (CASWANAME) provided a detailed overview of the region, in which he emphasized the complexity of the refugee problems in the region and the difficulties in finding solutions to the long-standing refugee situations. He described the challenges of advocating for political solutions and conflict prevention as prerequisites for durable solutions, and defined the key operational strategies for UNHCR's action in this region in 2001 and 2002.

20. In the ensuing debate, a number of questions were raised regarding specific refugee situations and means employed to address them. Particular reference was made to the economic, environmental and social complexities of hosting large numbers of refugees for long periods of time. One delegation called for a comprehensive, integrated solution, based on burden-sharing,

citing the action by the international community in the Kosovo crisis as an example of what could be done. Other delegations supported this appeal. Questions were also raised regarding the increasingly alarming situation in Afghanistan and the fresh movements of people it was prompting into neighbouring Pakistan and Islamic Republic of Iran, which already hosted large refugee populations. It was agreed that political solutions were a prerequisite to long-term solutions, voluntary repatriation being the preferred option. Some delegations suggested that the provision of assistance within Afghanistan was likely to decrease the cross-border population movement, and that a concerted inter-agency approach was essential, based on the mandates of the respective agencies.

21. Several delegations demonstrated their interest in women's and children's issues, expressing their concern that they had been affected through the budget cuts. Another issue of interest to some delegations was that of UNHCR's emergency response capacity, and how adequate it had been in responding to the needs of new Afghan refugees. One delegation also drew attention to the devastating effects of sanctions on humanitarian needs of the population of his country. The issue of limited resources was also mentioned by other delegations, as well as the need for capacity-building at governmental level. One observer delegation representing the NGOs drew attention to the lack of an adequate legal framework within the region, and the important role of civil society in seeking to fill this void. Other delegations stressed the importance of national capacity-building as a means to promote refugee law and accession to the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees. In the course of the debate, one delegation insisted that UNHCR should not be involved in conflict-resolution or activities of a political nature since these were not within its mandate.

22. Responding to specific questions raised during the discussion, the Director of the Regional Bureau clarified the respective responsibilities of UNHCR and UNWRA with respect to Palestinian refugees, particularly in view of the pleas for support and assistance made by several delegation. He explained that UNPWA was the United Nations agency responsible for Palestinians within its area of operations: Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, West Bank and Gaza. UNHCR's responsibility was limited to Palestinians elsewhere. Cooperation between the two agencies over the years had been and remained close. The importance of this cooperation was also incorporated in the Cooperation Agreement signed by UNHCR with the League of Arab States in 2000, which was welcomed by delegations. In answer to a question concerning the situation of some 10,000 persons at the Afghan-Tajik border, the Director indicated that after consultations with the High Commissioner, it had been decided that these were not persons of concern to UNHCR. Assistance would only be resumed pending compliance with specific conditions, namely the separation of combatants from civilians, the relocation of campsites and the provision of free access to the area.

23. In answer to enquiries relating *inter alia* to programmes for women and children and to staffing, the Deputy Director of the Regional Bureau noted that some operations in the region were constrained by inadequate access to the populations concerned, and that there were insufficient numbers of Arabic or Russian-speaking female staff.

24. Following a lengthy exchange on the question of Western Sahara, the Chairman highlighted the importance of this issue and emphasized the need fo roots of this problem to be further discussed in the relevant and appropriat forums.

D. Asia and the Pacific

25. By way of complement to the written overview of UNHCR's operation in the Asia-Pacific region, the Bureau Director provided an update of the most recent developments. They included UNHCR's participation in a time-limited, *ad hoc* repatriation of close to 600 refugees from West to East Timor, as wel as preparation for the first Bhutan-Nepal joint verification of persons eligible for repatriation. He also described preparations for forthcoming Asia-Pacific Consultation (APC) meetings in the region.

26. Many delegations commended UNHCR for its work in the region, expressin support for its policy in Timor. One delegation suggested that UNHCR should assess the lessons learned in Cambodia, East Timor, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Viet Nam with respect to reintegration and rehabilitation with a view to applying them in other parts of the region. Other specific issues raised by the delegations included North Koreans in China, the situation of Tibetans entering Nepal and India, the need to asses the situation of Karen, Karenni and Shan refugees in Thailand, as well as support for efforts to assist the remaining refugees from Myanmar in Bangladesh. One delegation also encouraged UNHCR to pursue efforts to help bring about the repatriation of over 100,000 refugees from Myanmar currently in Thailand. Another advised continued assistance to IDPs in Sri Lanka. UNHCR was also commended for its work as "honest broker" in the Bhutan-Nepal returnee verification process.

27. An observer delegation representing the NGOs expressed the hope that the Global Consultations on International Protection would encourage States in the region to accede to the 1951 Convention. Several delegations cited the APC as an important initiative, promoting dialogue and cooperation in th region and pledged their continued support of the process. In this context, it was suggested that that the APC might provide an appropriate forum for th Global Consultations.

28. Several delegations expressed interest in receiving more information o UNHCR's activities in the region on behalf of refugee women and children, noting that there was no Regional Adviser on Refugee Women and General Equality in the Asia and Pacific region. Several delegations expressed appreciation for efforts to enhance emergency management and response capacities in the region, reiterating their support for E-Centre activities based in Japan.

29. In his concluding statement, the Director of the Bureau for Asia and the Pacific confirmed that UNHCR would begin phasing down operations in East Timor in June 2001, and gave details of arrangements for concluding the shelter programme. It was hoped that development agencies would assume responsibility for subsequent shelter needs, thus avoiding the relief-to-development gap. He noted the concern expressed during the discussion as to potential refugee flows in other parts of Indonesia, confirming that the situation was being closely monitoring.

V. PROTECTION/PROGRAMME POLICY

A. Follow-up to Annual Theme of fifty-first session

30. The Chairman recalled that the annual theme of the Executive Committee's fifty-first session, had been *UNHCR@50: from response to solutions,* in view of UNHCR's anniversary year. He drew attention to the document that had provided the framework for the Committee's debate (A/AC.96.938) and to the Chairman's summary of the debate (A/AC.96/944, Annex 3). No statements were made on follow-up to this theme.

B. Emergency preparedness and response

31. Introducing this sub-item, the Head of Emergency and Security Service drew attention to measures taken in implementing the Plan of Action drawn up in 2000 with respect to preparedness, response, structural issues and post-emergency management, as well as other initiatives notably in strengthening or forging new partnerships, as described in the conference room paper EC/51/SC/CRP.4.

32. In their interventions, many delegations commended UNHCR for the progress achieved since the elaboration of the Plan of Action, as demonstrated in the recent emergencies in West Africa. There was a consensus that emergency response and security should be given priority, and should not be affected by any new restrictions on resources. One delegation supported a continued increase of core emergency staff. Several delegations expressed an interest in receiving an updated Plan of Action, which would include budgetary components.

33. Several delegations expressed some concern regarding UNHCR's plans to develop links with the military, cautioning that the criteria for such links needed to be clearly defined. They also emphasized that it was important to avoid duplication with other parts of the United Nations system, notably the Military and Civil Defence Unit of OCHA. One delegation observed that stand-by resources and military support in emergencies should always be under civilian control, respecting humanitarian principles.

34. Several delegations were pleased to note the efforts aimed at enhanced and joint training. This was particularly important in preparing the roster of staff. Efforts to involve other agencies in the training were also welcomed. One delegation requested that this training should take place in the field, close to countries in crisis. On contingency planning, one delegation wished to be informed of the criteria used for situational analysis. Another delegation welcomed UNHCR's involvement in the establishment of an enhanced early-warning capacity in New York. Several delegations expressed their interest in the real-time evaluation conducted during the Eritrea/Sudan emergency in June 2000, and recommended that this experiment should be renewed. It was also important to integrate lessons learned that emerged from the various evaluations into the training programmes.

35. On the subject of the management and staffing of emergencies, several delegations noted the recent efforts to clarify reporting lines and decision-

making processes. They nevertheless expressed concern at the continued difficulty in securing the release of qualified, senior staff. One delegation also questioned what measures could help ensure the effectiveness of the proposed additional stand-by arrangements. Other delegations also cautioned against the use of emergency teams to fill staffing gaps.

36. In conclusion of the discussion, the Head of the Emergency and Security Service expressed her appreciation for the numerous statements of support, and undertook to provide the Committee with an updated Plan of Action, as requested. She confirmed that every effort was being made to foster interagency cooperation at every level, notably with OCHA. On the issue of cooperation with the military, UNHCR's aim was to reinforce this collaboration through a proposed rotating scheme of short-term secondments of military personnel to facilitate exchange, training and mutual understanding between military institutions and UNHCR. This proposal was in line with the recommendation of the 2000 Plan of Action to re-establish a unit for liaison with military, which had met with a favourable response on the part of some governments. She acknowledged that the availability of senior staff as part of emergency teams remained a challenge, but a number of creative ideas were being tested including enhancing the capacity of selected middle-level staff to assume greater responsibilities. The transition phase between the emergency team and replacement staff was also difficult, but experience had shown that the first two months of an emergency were vital for the establishment of mechanisms which could make this transition smoother.

C. Reintegration: a progress report

37. The Director a.i.of the Division of Operational Support referred in his introduction to the range of on-going and new initiatives with respect to reintegration, as described in the progress report submitted to the meeting (EC/51/SC/CRP.5). He emphasized the importance of partnerships in the reintegration process and raised the question as to how far UNHCR should be involved.

38. Several delegations expressed their appreciation for the leadership shown by UNHCR in its efforts to put the reintegration issue on the international agenda. Special mention was made of the role of the former High Commissioner and of the Deputy High Commissioner through the Brookings Process. It was hoped that their efforts to achieve concrete results would be sustained. Some delegations recognized, however, that progress remained limited and that institutional and funding gaps continued to exist. One delegation acknowledged that these gaps existed not just among and between multilateral agencies, but also among the donors which needed to address their "capital gaps".

39. One delegation, referring to the overwhelming problems in areas receiving returnees appealed for assistance in the form of quick impact projects to ease their plight, and empower the refugees in their search for durable solutions. This view was echoed by several delegations who felt that reintegration was an essential aspect of UNHCR's work and that solutions-oriented approaches were as important as protection activities. Such approaches should therefore be pursued, and be accompanied by well-defined exit strategies. One delegation observed that by making an initial

investment to anchor returnees through self-reliance, the international community would be faced with less costs in the long run.

40. Many delegations highlighted the essential role of partnerships with development agencies and with bilateral donors, and welcomed UNHCR's current efforts in this direction, particularly in support of reconstructing African countries. They encouraged UNHCR to continue this work. One delegation, while recognizing the difficulties facing UNHCR when there are no other partners present, felt that partnerships should be forged with development actors at an earlier stage than had been the case so far.

41. Several delegations made reference to the specific country focus that had resulted from the meeting convened by UNHCR in November 2000. This implied a welcome shift from a theoretical approach, bringing new dynamism and commitment to the Brookings process. Several donors expressed their support and the hope that, based on sound analyses, new resources could be mobilized for Rwanda and the Republic of the Congo, the two countries that had been selected as pilots.

D. Reinforcing a community development approach

42. This sub-item was introduced by the Director a.i. of the Division of Operational Support, who emphasized that the community development approach as outlined in the conference room paper (EC/51/SC/CRP.6) had been advocated for a number of years but needed to become standard.

43. Many delegations expressed their support for this approach, recognizing the need to promote refugee empowerment while fully respecting their values and cultural backgrounds. Some delegations considered, however, that the draft conclusion annexed to the conference room paper should be stronger, and state more clearly the need to operationalize and integrate this approach in all UNHCR's programmes. One delegation proposed that it should be extended to the host communities. Other delegations expressed concern over possible budget implications, and advised that UNHCR should first pilot test the community development approach.

44. One observer delegation, speaking on behalf of the NGOs, welcomed and supported the policy approach and referred to close collaboration in this context between UNHCR and a number of NGOs. She gave examples of past efforts to bring community development and mobilization back on the agenda, and noted that greater emphasis was called for regarding the participation of children and adolescents in decision-making. The community development approach called for new methods of working with refugee communities, accepting that this was a long-term process that involves all actors in an ongoing dialogue.

45. Several delegations drew attention to the experience of NGOs in this field recommending that their best practice should be used as models. The importance of training with all partners was also acknowledged in order to adopt and implement a common approach. Several delegations drew attention to the need for the community development approach to be promoted in all sectors, in view of its cross-cutting nature, and in all phases of an operation.

46. The Director a.i. of the Division of Operational Support, assisted by the Head of Health and Community Development Section, took note of the various observations and suggestions that had been put forward. It was acknowledged that the main challenge in implementing the policy was to achieve a change in attitudes.

47. The draft conclusion, as amended, was adopted by the Committee. It appears in Annex I B.

E. Refugees and HIV/Aids

48. Presenting the conference room paper on this sub-item (EC/51/SC/CRP.7), the Director a.i. of the Division of Operational Support drew attention to the specific threats to refugees of this dreadful disease, described as the scourge of the century. He called attention to the urgent need for coordinated efforts and common strategies. This call was echoed in the introductory statement by the UNAIDS Director of Country Planning and Programme Development, who confirmed the overwhelming proportions of the disease. While there were some signs of growing awareness and commitment at internaional level, much still needed to be done. This was particularly important in meeting needs of refugees. It required reinforcing various interagency mechanisms and taking measures to ensure that refugee needs were included in national programmes. He also welcomed the forthcoming Special Session of the General Assembly which should serve to galvanize further international support.

49. Many delegations underlined the importance of HIV/AIDS as a global issue for which more concerted and coordinated action was needed. They called on UNHCR to place HIV/AIDS higher on its agenda and take the lead on this issue with respect to refugees. Many also referred to the particular risks faced by women, adolescent girls, orphans and children, and stressed the need for a comprehensive multi-faceted response, including protection, education, health, community participation and the empowerment of women and youth. There needed to be a focus on awareness campaigns that would include the local population. Partnerships needed to be built with refugees and their leaders. Several delegations also drew attention to the important role played by refugee women, and well as the key role of education. One delegation noted that abstinence and responsible behaviour must be included as essential elements of prevention. The NGO observer also drew attention to the stigma attached to the disease and its adverse effects notably on resettlement opportunities.

50. Some delegations encouraged UNHCR to collect and provide more data on the problem of HIV/AIDS in refugee situations. They also welcomed the creation of an internal task force. One delegation suggested that UNHCR should also convene a meeting with donors and host governments to stimulate further support. One delegation recommended that a working document on HIV/AIDS and refugees could usefully be submitted to the forthcoming General Assembly Special Session. The representative of the OAU referred to the high-level meeting that was to take place in April 2001 in Nigeria at which this would be a major issue.

51. A number of delegates noted that the cost of care was beyond the reach of many countries, as well as that of the humanitarian community. One

delegations suggested that a special consolidated appeal might be a way to raise additional funds to support prevention and care.

52. In their concluding remarks, both the Director a.i. of the Division of Operational Support and the Head of Health and Community Development Section expressed appreciation for the many acknowledgements of the importance and urgency of this issue. They noted emphasis on prevention rather than treatment, and the links with community development and programmes for women and children. They also undertook to following-up on specific suggestions that had been made and to report back to the Committee on progress in due course.

F. Safety and security issues

53. Introducing the conference room paper on this sub-item (EC/51/SC/CRP.8), the Head of the Emergency and Security Service called attention to action recently undertaken to reinforce and strengthen staff and refugee security. This action focused on three key areas: mainstreaming responsibilities and capacities for security within the Office; supporting pro-active security management; and establishing and maintaining standards of security in UNHCR's operations. She drew attention to some complementary statistical information made available to the Standing Committee on security incidents in the year 2000, which indicated a sharp increase (over 50%) in comparison with the previous year.

54. Many delegations expressed support for the priority areas as described in the paper and emphasized the importance of management aspects of this important issue, which must remain high on the Standing Committee's agenda. One delegation stressed the importance of clear lines of decision-making in this area. Another called for more explicit explanations as to what was being done to change the organizational culture in order to increase accountability at all levels. Regarding personal responsibility, some delegations also expressed interest in the plan to require all Heads of Office in hazardous duty stations to draft a security protocol with their staff.

55. The importance of inter-agency cooperation was also highlighted by some delegations, welcoming UNHCR's intentions to make more effective use of the United Nations inter-agency security management team, and encouraging UNHCR to make full use of the extended capacity of UNSECOORD. Interest was also expressed in the development at inter-agency level of minimum operational security standards. On the issue of funding, several delegations considered that costs of the enhanced resources for UNSECOORD should be covered through the UN Regular Budget. They acknowledged nevertheless that a field-based agency such as UNHCR would need additional funding for its increased needs and proposed to examine how best to provide the support required.

56. An observer delegation representing the NGOs recalled the interdependence of humanitarian agencies in the field with respect to staff security, calling for greater use to be made of the UNHCR-NGO framework agreement for operational partnership as a platform upon which to build further security collaboration. The NGOs were encouraged by the creation of a task force in the context of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee which was currently working on some recommendations.

57. On the issue of refugee security, several delegations renewed their support for the understanding reached between UNHCR and the United Nations Department of Peace-Keeping Operations (DPKO). Several delegations also referred to the proposed deployment of Humanitarian Security Officers (HSOs) for which UNHCR had sought the support of governments. This dialogue was still ongoing. Welcoming the link between staff security and refugee security, one delegation drew attention to the need to include the security of host populations in areas surrounding those where there were large numbers of refugees. Some delegations also referred to the discussions that had taken place at the Global Consultations relating to camp security. One delegation observed that a holistic approach was essential that included attention to camp design and layout.

58. In her response, the Head of Emergency and Security Service thanked delegations for the many expressions of support and for the specific suggestions and observations they had made. She acknowledged that the issue of HSOs was complex and needed further joint reflection. On the issue of funding, she appealed for governments to ensure that the current cost-sharing debate did not result in having to divert resources from UNHCR's essential work in order to meet such costs.

VI. COORDINATION

59. The Head of Secretariat and Inter-Organization Service presented a brief update on coordination issues within the UN systems, for which an information note had been made available (EC/50/SC/INF.1). Major developments had included the change in the ACC mechanism and follow-up to the Brahimi Report. Important meetings were scheduled for April 2001, notably the ACC in Nairobi, immediately followed by ECHA and preparations for ECOSOC's humanitarian segment.

60. In a statement to the Committee, the Deputy Director of OCHA and Assistant Emergency Relief Coordinator appealed for a concerted effort to strengthen the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP). This was all the more vital in view of the erosion of multilateral humanitarian action observed in past years. The CAPs were the result of painful efforts at coordination and prioritization in the field, and provided a mechanism to avoid glaring discrepancies in support for appeals, adding some perspective to real humanitarian needs. He called for a strengthening of the IASC and its reference groups which were doing much useful work in aligning policies and practices in a range of fields. On the subject of natural disaster response, he described the work achieved by the UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) Teams which had been deployed in 80 situations since 1993 and most recently to complex emergencies. He further referred to the complex issue of the humanitarian-military interface in disaster relief, and to the work of the Military and Civil Defense Coordination Unit within OCHA, with its foreign military and civil defense assets. The system was based on the Oslo guidelines adopted in 1994. These guidelines were currently under review to assess their potential application to complex emergencies.

61. An observer delegation speaking on behalf of the NGOs referred to the Brahimi report and its follow-up. While acknowledging that the report was an important step in strengthening the peace-making, peace-keeping and

peace-building work of the United Nations, it was regrettable that it paid insufficient attention to the fact that many of the actors involved in the humanitarian response were not from the United Nations. Moreover the report did not adequately reflect the difference between the principles of peace operations and those governing the humanitarian response, i.e. the principle of impartiality as understood by humanitarian organizations. This was based on a stated obligation to deliver aid on the basis of need alone, in accordance with the precepts of the Red Cross/NGO Code of Conduct. He recommended that the follow-up to the Brahimi report should include specific measures to address the role of women in peacekeeping operations and expressed concern, on behalf of the NGO community, that the implementation of the Brahimi report could be used to increase the preponderance of political and military actors of humanitarian response and compromise the independence of the humanitarian agencies.

62. Several delegations welcomed the availability of a written update under this agenda item as an invaluable source of comprehensive information. Some requested that future updates might give more prominence to UNHCR's contributions to the various mechanisms and the issues it wished to advocate. One delegation suggested that this item might come earlier on the agenda to allow time for lengthier discussion.

VII. STATEMENT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE UNHCR STAFF COUNCIL

63. In the course of the meeting, the Committee was provided with an update on the activities of UNHCR's Staff Council. The Chairperson referred to the reviews initiated by the High Commissioner and their implications in terms of staff reductions. Other issues of priority to the Staff Council included staff security and various aspects of the human resources management of the Office.

VIII. GOVERNANCE

64. The Director of the Division of Communication and Information recalled the various enhancements of the ExCom format that had been tested at its last session in October 2000, and put forward a series of similar proposals for the coming session, contained in document EC/50/SC/CRP.3.

65. Several delegations expressed their support for these proposals, notably the annual theme, which would this year be replaced by an overview of the High Commissioner's perspective on priorities for the work of the Office in this first year of his mandate.

66. Some delegations suggested that the panel sessions should focus on challenging issues linked to UNHCR's operations in the field. Support was also expressed for the funding meeting. One delegation observed that the adoption of the budget should be preceded by substantial discussions on funding. Several delegations looked forward to further proposals on strengthening the involvement of the NGOs, currently being explored by the Bureau and NGO representatives.

67. In the course of the meeting, the Chairman also reminded the Standing Committee of the various resolutions that had been under the item on UNHCR at the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly. They were as follows:

A/RES/55/72 - *Enlargement of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United High Commissioner for Refugees* (Mexico);
A/RES/55/74 - *Office of the United Nations High Commissioner* ("omnibus");
A/RES/55/75 - *Ad hoc Committee of the General Assembly for the announcement of voluntary contributions to the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;*
A/RES/55/76 - *Fiftieth anniversary of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and World Refugee Day;*
A/RES/55/77 - *Assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa.*

IX. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

68. Before closing the meeting, the Committee led by the Chairman paid tribute to the outgoing Deputy High Commissioner, acknowledging his exceptional human qualities and thanking him for the impetus he had brought to UNHCR's work in several areas.

DECISION AND CONCLUSION
(as adopted at the 20th meeting of the Standing Committee,
12 - 14 March 2001)

A. DECISION ON OVERALL PROGRAMME AND FUNDING IN 2000 AND PROJECTIONS FOR 2001 (Item 3(I))

The Standing Committee,

Recalling the Executive Committee's decision at its fifty-first session on programme, administrative and financial matters (A/AC.96/932, para. 21);

(a) *Notes* that the UNHCR's overall needs for 2001 based on currently known requirements amounts to $ 898.5 million as approved by the Executive Committee (which includes the allocation of $ 19.1 million from the United Nations Regular Budget and $ 7 million for Junior Professional Officers), and an additional $ 56.2 million for four Supplementary Programmes;

(b) *Notes* that, in view of the low carryover from 2000 and projected levels of income in 2001, UNHCR has instructed its field offices to plan implementation of its programmes in the expectation that they will only receive up to 80 per cent of approved budgets;

(c) *Encourages* UNHCR to aim to address budget shortfalls by adjusting activities based on priorities set across regions and sectors with a focus on core needs;

(d) *Welcomes* the initiative taken by the High Commissioner to review the priorities and the funding mechanisms of the Office and looks forward to being informed by the High Commissioner of the outcomes of this review process;

(e) *Emphasizes* the importance of the international community providing adequate funding for UNHCR's programmes and *encourages* the Executive Committee to engage in a substantive and transparent discussion of the Budget prior to its adoption;

(f) *Stresses* that, with the introduction of the unified budget since the year 2000, early announcements and payments of contributions are essential to allow the continuation and timely implementation of the UNHCR's Programmes;

(g) *Urges* all Governments to consider identifying additional contributions for UNHCR's programmes in 2001.

B. CONCLUSION ON REINFORCING A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT APPROACH (Item 4(iv))

The Standing Committee,

(a) *Welcomes* the efforts made by UNHCR outlined in EC/51/SC/CRP.6 to reinforce a community development approach in addressing the search for durable solutions with due participation of refugees and people of concern to the Office;

(b) *Endorses* the objectives and essential elements of this approach with respect to its planning and implementation;

(c) *Requests* UNHCR to operationalize and mainstream a community approach in all of its activities, and to promote implementation among its partners, in cooperation with other relevant actors;

(d) *Recommends* UNHCR to promote, in the implementation of community-building activities, the involvement of host populations in the country of asylum, as well as the involvement of all population components in the country of origin, during the reintegration phase;

(e) *Requests* UNHCR to report to the Standing Committee on progress made in policy development and operationalization of a community development approach.

UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.96/945/Corr.1
8 August 2001

Original: ENGLISH

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Fifty-second session

REPORT OF THE TWENTIETH MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
(12 - 14 March 2001)

Corrigendum

1. Page 1, after paragraph 2:

For II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA OF THE NINETEENTH MEETING ...
read II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA OF THE TWENTIETH MEETING ...

2. Page 2, paragraph 6, line 2:

After requirements now reached $954.7 insert million

GE.*200*002302*

ENG

UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.96/946
25 June 2001

Original: ENGLISH

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Fifty-second session

UNHCR'S INSPECTION PLAN AND ACTIVITIES

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Inspector General's Office is located within the Executive Office, reporting directly to the High Commissioner. The Inspector General is also the focal point for investigations in UNHCR and acts as Secretariat for the Oversight Committee, which ensures effective review and follow-up of oversight reports, including audit reports.

2. This report covers developments in inspection and investigation over the last twelve months, as well as inspection plans for the rest of 2001.

II. INSPECTIONS

3. Inspections provide the High Commissioner with comprehensive and systematic assessments of UNHCR operations, focusing on those factors, both internal and external to UNHCR, considered most relevant to the effective and efficient discharge of UNHCR's responsibilities. Inspections cover all aspects of UNHCR's field operations, including internal management (individual confidential interviews with all staff at each field location), external relations (meetings with UNHCR's key government, United Nations and non-governmental organization (NGO) counterparts and members of the diplomatic community to obtain their assessment of UNHCR's performance and the country team's strengths and weaknesses), the views of refugees, and the overall appropriateness and effectiveness of the objectives of the field operation and actions taken to achieve them. UNHCR inspections are thus broadly analogous to the inspectorates of some national diplomatic services. Inspections also

GE.*200100193 7*

ENG

provide UNHCR's field offices with an independent and objective review of their performance, where necessary, as well as a second opinion on difficult issues and recommendations for improvements and action to overcome constraints, often drawing on the best practices or solutions seen in other inspections.

4. The cycle of each inspection begins several weeks before the mission, with detailed briefings of the team at Headquarters, the completion of confidential individual questionnaires by all staff in the field location, and the completion of a comprehensive operations and administrative questionnaire by the field office. The mission itself ends with a debriefing of the senior staff of the field office and a discussion of the draft recommendations. This is followed by debriefings at Headquarters and the presentation of the report and recommendations to the High Commissioner. Once approved by the High Commissioner, a formal follow up mechanism is set in motion to monitor the implementation of recommendations.

5. UNHCR has offices in some 120 countries. Depending on the size of the operation being inspected, and the number of locations where UNHCR has staff, an inspection team comprises between two and four staff from the Inspector General's Office and one colleague with knowledge of region-specific protection issues, seconded to the team from the Department of International Protection.

6. In 2000, the High Commissioner agreed that inspections of smaller operations could be led by the most senior inspection officer, rather than all inspections being led by the Inspector General. This provided increased capacity to achieve the goal of inspecting each UNHCR country programme every four or five years. The initial plan approved by the High Commissioner for 2000/2001 had to be significantly modified in the second half of the year, when priority was given to conducting inquiries into the murders in September of UNHCR staff in Indonesia and Guinea. Nevertheless, by the end of July 2001, a total of 100 countries will have been inspected since 1995.

7. Inspections over the last 12 months covered operations in India, Kenya (Regional Service Centre and Branch Office), Lebanon, the Netherlands, Ukraine and Yemen. Between 1 June and 31 December 2001, inspections of field operations in Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Columbia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malawi, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Republic of the Congo, the Russian Federation, Tunisia, Venezuela, Zambia and Zimbabwe will be conducted.

8. Observations from recent inspections on issues concerning field and, in particular, national staff were presented to the Senior Management Committee in August 2000. Summary analyses of recurrent findings from inspection missions are provided to UNHCR's senior management for the purpose of drawing lessons learned and taking appropriate action. A report on observations from inspections during the period from March 1999 to March 2001 was recently prepared for the High Commissioner and UNHCR staff and is being made available on the UNHCR's public website. This report covers a number of areas and issues affecting both UNHCR staff and operations. These range from the regularization of the status of UNHCR country offices, especially when host governments are

party to international instruments and/or are members of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, to aspects of reinforcing coordination with national and international counterparts and issues concerning improvement of internal management of offices, including measures to ensure staff security and control mechanisms.

III. INVESTIGATIONS

9. As focal point for investigations, the Inspector General is also responsible for ensuring investigation of alleged or suspected wrongdoing, including misuse of UNHCR funds, resources or facilities, abuse of authority, harassment, or any other illegal or improper conduct involving UNHCR staff or funds. The post of Investigations Coordinator is dedicated to this function. Depending on their nature, investigations are conducted by the UNHCR Audit Section of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), the OIOS investigation Section, or by using other resources. The outcome is either a referral for disciplinary action, prosecution before a local court, or closure of the case, where the charges are determined to be unfounded.

10. Over the last year, a total of 13 inquiries were conducted, including cases of harassment, theft, fraud and breach of confidentiality. At the request of the High Commissioner, priority was given to conduct inquiries into the murders of UNHCR staff in Indonesia and Guinea in September 2000. The summary reports of these inquiries were made public on UNHCR's website in December 2000. Other major investigations concerned cases of irregularities in refugee status determination and resettlement processes. In the last quarter of 2000, due to limited investigation resources within UNHCR and complexities of the case, the Inspector General asked the OIOS Investigation Section to investigate allegations of irregularities in UNHCR's Office in Kenya. Their final report will be presented to the United Nations General Assembly. UNHCR and OIOS will conduct a lessons learned review on completion of this investigation and further necessary action will be determined thereafter. In the meantime, UNHCR is in the process of finalizing a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation with OIOS Investigations Section.

11. During 2000, UNHCR cooperated closely with the Joint Inspection Unit in the preparation of its report "Strengthening the Investigations Function in the United Nations System Organisations" (JIU/REP/2000/9, available on the JIU website at www.unsystem.org/jiu). The report concluded by highlighting the necessity of reinforcing the investigation function in the United Nations system.

UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.96/947
7 August 2001

Original: ENGLISH

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Fifty-second session

UNHCR'S EVALUATION PLAN AND ACTIVITIES

I. INTRODUCTION

1. UNHCR's evaluation function has been the subject of careful review by the Executive Committee, including its informal consultations held in November 2000, which focused on the need to further develop this function and to devolve evaluation activities to the organization's regional bureaux and field offices. A plan of action designed to realize those objectives was reviewed, and has been the basis of activities by the Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit (EPAU) in 2001. These activities were subsequently discussed at the June 2001 meeting of the Standing Committee.

2. This paper first outlines some developments in terms of the management and direction of UNHCR's evaluation function. The second section focuses on the utilization of evaluation findings, while the final section provides an overview of EPAU's current and future work programme.

II. MANAGEMENT AND STRATEGIC DIRECTION OF UNHCR'S EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

A. Evaluation policy, procedures and plan of action

3. Following extensive consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, a UNHCR evaluation policy has been established. The policy, which takes effect from 1 January 2002, defines the role of evaluation in UNHCR and outlines the specific tasks to be undertaken by EPAU. It identifies the principles guiding UNHCR's evaluation activities, as well as the criteria to be used in the evaluation of UNHCR's programmes. Copies of the policy will be available at the October 2001 meeting of the Executive Committee.

iE.*200100223*

ENG

4. The policy includes a three-year development plan which:

- Commits UNHCR to minimum and steadily increasing levels of evaluation activity and expenditure;

- Places new responsibilities on UNHCR's regional bureaux and field offices to undertake and commission evaluations; and

- Introduces new approaches and procedures that are intended to ensure that the findings and recommendations of evaluations are effectively utlilized.

5. The policy will be supported by the introduction of step-by-step guide to the management of evaluation and self-evaluation projects, thereby ensuring that evaluations are conducted in a uniform and principled manner. An important task for EPAU in the months to come will be to ensure that these procedures are properly understood and implemented by regional bureaux, directorates and field offices as they assume new evaluation responsibilities.

B. Strengthening EPAU's capacity

6. One JPO post was established in EPAU in January 2001. In January 2002, an additional P4 post will be added to the unit.

7. With earmarked funding, EPAU has engaged an external evaluation specialist on a long-term consultancy contract. The consultant will lead the unit's efforts to equip other parts of the organization with the skills and tools required to assume responsibility for evaluation activities.

8. Continued efforts have been made to provide EPAU staff members with professional evaluation training. Two of the unit's staff members participated in a three-day evaluation training course organized by the University of York in the United Kingdom. The Head of EPAU also attended a week-long training workshop for senior evaluation managers, organized by the Action Learning Network on Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP).

C. Devolving the evaluation function

9. A number of steps have been taken in recent months to devolve the evaluation function within UNHCR and to strengthen links between EPAU and other parts of the organization. These include:

- Expanding the Evaluation Committee to include representatives of all the regional bureaux;

- Establishing an evaluation fund that can be accessed by regional bureaux, sub-regional directorates and field offices wishing to commission evaluations;

- Convening a second evaluation training workshop in Geneva in May 2001. More than 40 UNHCR staff members, as well as a government and an NGO representative, have now participated in these workshops;

- Establishing steering committees for all major new evaluation projects, enabling key stakeholders within UNHCR to be involved in the process of planning, implementation and utlilization;

- Developing a methodology for the organization of facilitated self-evaluation workshops, and field-testing that methodology in south-west Ethiopia;

- Organizing lessons-learned workshops on major UNHCR operations and policy issues, in association with the organization's regional bureaux and functional units. The latest initiative of this type was held in Monrovia and concerned the Liberian repatriation and reintegration programme; and

- Identifying all of those evaluations, reviews and assessments undertaken or commissioned by other parts of the organization. Recent examples include evaluations of the shuttle bus project in Kosovo (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), the UNHCR programme for internally displaced persons in Colombia, UNHCR's local settlement programme in Serbia (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), the UNHCR programme for urban refugees in Dhaka, Bangladesh, and the mobile court project in Dadaab, Kenya.

D. Diversified methodologies

10. UNHCR has continued to pursue a diversified approach to the evaluation function, involving the introduction of alternative and innovative methodologies. A number of these initiatives, including joint evaluations with other agencies, lessons-learned workshops and facilitated self-evaluations, are described elsewhere in this paper. In addition, EPAU commissioned a "beneficiary-based" evaluation of the UNHCR programme in Guinea, involving extensive consultations with refugees, and undertook "real-time" evaluations of UNHCR emergency operations in Angola, Eritrea and Sudan.

E. Inter-agency cooperation

11. Steps have been taken to strengthen UNHCR's cooperation with its partners in the area of evaluation. An inter-agency evaluation (OCHA, UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP) has been commissioned to examine the United Nations' humanitarian programmes in Afghanistan. A joint Danida/UNHCR evaluation of the UNHCR programme for IDPs in Angola has been completed. UNHCR has also participated in WFP evaluations of refugee assistance programmes in Sudan and Uganda. EPAU continues to be an active member of ALNAP, as well as the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on Evaluation.

F. Dissemination

12. Using earmarked funding, EPAU commissioned a communications expert to undertake a review of the unit's dissemination activities. As a result of that review, EPAU has introduced a new strategy of targeted hard-copy distribution, both within and outside the organization. The release of each

new evaluation report has been marked by the electronic distribution of an 'evaluation alert', providing a concise and lively synopsis of the report's findings and recommendations. Looking to the future, EPAU hopes to experiment with the presentation of evaluation findings in audio-visual formats.

III. MAKING EFFECTIVE USE OF EVALUATION

13. In UNHCR, as in many other humanitarian organizations, evaluation has traditionally focused on the preparation of a report that presents a set of findings and recommendations. While not discounting the value of such reports, UNHCR is now committed to the introduction of a project-based and utilization-focused approach to evaluation, maximizing the extent to which evaluations act as a catalyst for organizational analysis, learning and change. To achieve this objective, all major evaluation projects will guided by a stakeholder steering committee, while every effort will be made to incorporate workshops and other participatory activities in the design of evaluation projects.

14. The introduction of a new evaluation policy, incorporating a management response requirement, is also intended to ensure that UNHCR makes effective use of the evaluation function. According to the new policy, accountability for the implementation of evaluation recommendations belongs first and foremost to the operational managers concerned. EPAU will, for its part, encourage, facilitate and track the follow-up process. At the same time, renewed efforts will be made to feed evaluation findings into UNHCR's policy-making procedures, staff training activities and the preparation of management tools.

15. The action taken to make use of evaluation findings will inevitably differ from one case to another. The EPAU project on urban refugees, for example, will conclude with a stakeholder workshop and the preparation of a revised policy statement. The findings of the recent review of UNHCR's activities in Liberia are being fed into the planning process for the Sierra Leone reintegration programme, while lessons learned from the implementation of the security package in the United Republic of Tanzania have been used as a basis for planning the organization's operation in Guinea.

16. The findings of major thematic reviews on issues such as refugee children, refugee women and statelessness will be shared and discussed with the project steering committees, the Executive Committee and other stakeholders, so that appropriate follow-up plans can be established.

IV. EVALUATION WORK PROGRAMME

17. EPAU's current work programme is focused on several of the key policy issues currently confronting UNHCR.

A. Refugee children

18. EPAU has commissioned an independent evaluation of UNHCR's role in meeting the rights and protection needs of refugee children. Work on this project began early in 2001, and is expected to be completed by the end of the

year. The leader of the evaluation team will provide a briefing on the review at the October 2001 meeting of the Executive Committee.

B. Refugee women

19. EPAU has seconded a gender specialist staff member to a review of the implementation of the guidelines on refugee women, which is being undertaken by the Women's Commission on Refugee Women and Children, supported by members of the Executive Committee. The timeframe for this review, which is also benefiting from input by UNHCR's Senior Coordinator for Refugee Women, is similar to that of the evaluation on refugee children.

20. In addition, EPAU has commissioned an in-depth evaluation of the firewood distribution project in Dadaab, Kenya, which is intended to address the problem of sexual and gender-based violence, and is also currently commissioning a review of the Kosovo Women's Initiative. At the conclusion of the latter project, it is hoped to produce a broader review of lessons learned from the Women's Initiatives in Bosnia, Kosovo and Rwanda.

C. Statelessness

21. A review of UNHCR's activities in relation to statelessness, undertaken jointly by an external consultant and an EPAU staff member, has recently been completed and published.

D. Refugee education

22. Working in close association with the Health and Community Development Service, in 2000 EPAU commissioned a number of studies on key aspects of refugee education. These studies, which are to be published as a collection, formed the basis of a workshop held in Washington D.C. in March 2001, attended by a wide range of experts, UNHCR, NGO and government personnel.

E. Protracted refugee situations

23. With earmarked funding, EPAU has established a project to review the way in which UNHCR and its partners manage protracted refugee situations. Working on the basis of several case studies and thematic reviews, the project will attempt to establish a menu of programming options that can be used to promote livelihoods and self-reliance amongst refugee populations, until such time as voluntary repatriation becomes possible. This project is being undertaken jointly with the Reintegration and Local Settlement Section and is also being closely coordinated with the Regional Bureau for Africa.

F. Protection and evaluation

24. EPAU, in association with the Department of International Protection, has held a series of preliminary meetings with evaluation staff members from the International Committee of the Red Cross, so as to discuss the challenge of ensuring that protection and human rights issues are properly incorporated in evaluations of humanitarian programmes. Further work on this issue is anticipated in the months to come.

G. Future evaluations

25. EPAU works on the basis of a flexible and rolling work programme, enabling the unit to respond to changing demands and circumstances and to mak use of innovative evaluation methodologies. The unit will in future undertak and commission evaluations of major policy and programme issues, as well as evaluations of specific operations, programmes and projects. The work programme will be established on the basis of a consultative process with stakeholders, including members of the Executive Committee.

26. At the time of writing, EPAU is planning to commission an independent evaluation of the community services function in UNHCR, and to establish a joint evaluation of the organization's programmes in Guinea and Sierra Leone. The unit is also assisting the Regional Bureau for Europe to review UNHCR's capacity-building efforts in Central Europe, and is supporting the Engineerin and Environmental Services Section in a review of environmental projects in Tanzania and Uganda.

27. Further details of UNHCR's evaluation work programme can be found on the Evaluation and Policy Analysis page of the UNHCR website, <www.unhcr.ch>. A list of recently completed reports is also provided in Annex I.

H. Policy development and research

28. In addition to its efforts in the area of evaluation and operational policy analysis, EPAU has continued to contribute to the broader process of policy development within UNHCR. During the period under review, the unit ha played an active role with regard to issues such as the role of humanitarian action in conflict prevention; the role of regional organizations in the process of peacebuilding; the link between humanitarian assistance and development aid; the changing nature of the refugee problem in Africa; the nexus between migration and asylum; and the security and civilian character o refugee camps.

29. EPAU is responsible for the publication of the working paper series, "New Issues in Refugee Research", which provides UNHCR with an opportunity to disseminate the results of independent and refugee-related research. While they are not evaluations in the traditional sense of the word, the papers present a critical perspective on the work of UNHCR and the international environment in which it operates. A list of recent papers is contained in Annex II.

Annex I

Evaluation reports, November 2000 - July 2001

Evaluation of UNHCR's policy on refugees in urban areas: a case study review of New Delhi (EPAU/2000/04)

Minimum standards and essential needs in a protracted refugee situation: a review of the UNHCR programme in Kakuma, Kenya (EPAU/2000/05)

Evaluation of UNHCR's role in strengthening national NGOs (EPAU/2001/01)

A beneficiary-based evaluation of UNHCR's programme in Guinea, West Africa (EPAU/2002/02)

The Sudan/Eritrea emergency, May-July 2000: an evaluation of UNHCR's response (EPAU/2001/03)

Evaluation of the UNHCR programme for internally displaced people in Angola (EPAU/2001/04)

Lessons learned from the implementation of the Tanzania security package (EPAU/2001/05)

The WHALE: Wisdom we have acquired from the Liberia Experience: report of a lessons-learned workshop (EPAU/2001/06)

Evaluation of UNHCR's policy on refugees in urban areas: a case study review of Cairo (EPAU/2001/07)

Evaluation of the Dadaab firewood project (EPAU/2001/08)

Evaluation of UNHCR's role and activities in relation to statelessness (EPAU/2001/09)

Forthcoming reports:

Evaluation of UNHCR's policy on refugees in urban areas: a case study review of Nairobi (EPAU/2001/10)

Lessons learned from UNHCR's experience with reintegration programmes in South-East Asia (EPAU/2001/11)

Research papers, "New Issues in Refugee Research"
November 2000 - July 2001

No. 33. UNHCR's mandate: the politics of being non-political
David Forsythe

No. 34. Environmental refugees: myth or reality?
Richard Black

No. 35. Refugee aid and protection in rural Africa: working in parallel or cross-purposes?
Oliver Bakewell

No. 36. Humanitarian issues in the Biafra conflict
Nathaniel H. Goetz

No. 37. Statistically correct asylum data: prospects and limitations
Bela Hovy

No. 38. Vital links in social security: Somali refugees in the Dadaab camps, Kenya
Cindy Horst

No. 39. The trafficking and smuggling of refugees: the end game in European asylum policy?
John Morrison and Beth Crosland

No. 40. The humanitarian hangover: transnationalization of governmental practice in Tanzania's refugee-populated areas
Loren B. Landau

No. 41. Global migration trends and asylum
Susan F. Martin

No. 42. Comfortable with chaos: working with UNHCR and the NGOs; reflections from the 1999 Kosovo refugee crisis
Tim Cross

No. 43. Mind the gap! UNHCR, humanitarian assistance and the development process
Jeff Crisp

No. 44. The interface between migration and asylum in Bosnia and Herzegovina
UNHCR Office of the Chief of Mission for Bosnia and Herzegovina